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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: U.S.-TAIWAN RELATIONS

¶1. Summary: Taiwan's major Chinese-language dailies focused news coverage June 1 on the KMT ticket for the 2008 presidential election, following Legislative Speaker Wang Jin-pyng's declining to become the running mate of Ma Ying-jeou on Thursday; on the DPP's disputes over its legislative primary process; on the American Chamber of Commerce's (AmCham) release of its Taiwan White Paper Thursday; and on former President Lee Teng-hui's trip to Japan. The pro-independence "Liberty Times" ran a banner headline on page four that said "AmCham Calls for Direct [Cross-Strait] Links; Council for Economic Planning and Development Alleges [That AmCham] Has Interfered in Taiwan's Internal Affairs." The centrist, KMT-leaning "China Times" carried the results of its latest survey on page four, which showed that the approval rating for KMT presidential candidate Ma Ying-jeou has dropped to a new low of 32 percent, while 21 percent of respondents said they support DPP presidential candidate Frank Hsieh.

¶2. In terms of editorials and commentaries, a "Liberty Times" editorial commented on President Chen Shui-bian's remarks at a video conference before the National Press Club Tuesday and on the 2008 presidential election. The article said Chen's clear elaboration of the Taiwan-centered line and Taiwan-U.S. relations would enlighten both the international community, in particular the United States, and Taiwan's future leader. An op-ed piece in the pro-unification "United Daily News" discussed AmCham's Taiwan White Paper and urged the DPP government to listen to the views of an objective third party. End summary.

### ¶3. U.S.-Taiwan Relations

A) "2008 Election Is the Battle between Nativist Line and Ultimate Unification"

The pro-independence "Liberty Times" [circulation: 500,000] editorialized (6/1):

"... During the video conference [with the National Press Club], President Chen elaborated to U.S. political figures and journalists on the Taiwan-centered line and how to create a win-win situation for Taiwan-U.S. relations, and he also pointed out the threats caused by the rise of China. [Chen's] position was firm and his analysis very clear; [the video conference] could thus be viewed as a successful publicity activity. Even though Chen has only one year left in his term, the DPP's coming to power in 2000 still marked the unprecedented rule of Taiwan by a nativist regime, which has secured the structure of 'one country on either side of the [Taiwan] Strait.' How Taiwan, in the face of this brand new historical trend, will overcome China's suppression and continue to expand its room for survival in this adverse international environment has thus become a difficult task. Chen's concluding of his seven years' experience in ruling [the island] was enlightening both to the international community and to the future president of Taiwan. [Chen's remarks] will allow the international community, in particular our important ally, the United States, better to

understand that Taiwan is a free, democratic country and not a troublemaker. Also, Chen has given sincere advice to the future state leader of Taiwan that the island will find no way out except by ticking to the line of independence and self-determination. ...

"Take Taiwan's bid to join the ASEAN as an example; this idea gave no cause for much criticism. But the biggest problem lies in the fact that the KMT's intent behind every move it makes is to unify [with China]. In this context, the island's ASEAN bid is bound to link up with direct transportation across the Taiwan Strait, and it seems that [for the KMT,] only by doing so can Taiwan dodge the crisis of being marginalized. But in reality, such a move will only limit Taiwan's plan to go global inside the framework of China and will mistake Sinicization for globalization. ... The presidential election in 2008 will certainly be a battle between nativists and aliens, and between freedom and authoritarianism; it will be a critical battle for determining Taiwan's sovereignty and way of living. ... Thus, Chen's worry about the person upholding ultimate unification winning the [2008] election is definitely not a groundless fear. ..."

B) "Taiwan Dragon with Bad Teeth [Should] Try on U.S. Prescription"

Lin Chin-yuan, associate professor of Tamkang University's Department of Economics, opined in the pro-unification "United Daily News" [circulation: 400,000] (6/1):

"... The American Chamber of Commerce (AmCham) published its 2007 Taiwan White Paper Thursday in which it expressed concern over Taiwan's economic competitiveness lagging behind the other three Asian tigers. ... What AmCham did not mention was that South Korea, which is competing with Taiwan, has overcome barriers and demonstrated its grand ambition by championing the railway link between South and North Korea. By contrast, the Taiwan tiger seems to have grown old and doddering and lost its power and prestige.

"Despite the consideration of its own vital interests, AmCham's prescription for Taiwan is worth contemplation, including mitigating the incessant acrimonious political wrangling, so that economic issues will not be elbowed out of the focus of public discourse; speeding up the opening of [cross-Strait] direct transportation to allow regularized cross-Strait flows of people, goods and services, and investment; and fostering legislative transparency to reduce corruption, holding the elected representatives accountable for illegal and unethical activities. These views did not come from the pro-unification faction or the Green reformers but from an objective third party. It will be 'game over' for Taiwan if the DPP, which has ruled Taiwan for eight years and intends to continue doing so, turns a deaf ear to them. ..."

YOUNG